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COLOR SENSE AND TASTE—THEIR VALUE IN THE HOME.

By A. ASHMUN KELLY.



IT APPEARS, according to the modern theory of color, that the color sense is purely physical, just as the senses of taste, smell or hearing are, and that it may be even more easily cultivated. The childish fancy is for strong colors, and for massing brilliant colorings. This is true of the savage and semi-barbarous nations also, and, however incongruous their arrangements of colors may seem to the educated eye, the groupings will be found harmonious. The color instinct of the child and savage is natural and fresh and correct. It is only when the instinct is trammelled and perverted by the erroneous teachings of fashion, that discords occur, or when, as sometimes happens, there is imperfect development of the color sense. In some persons, indeed, this sense would seem to be wholly lacking, and the most serious obstacle to household furnishing is found where this occurs. This is the explanation of the fact that so many homes display horribly inharmonious groupings of colors.

But it may be said for some housekeepers that they have not been able to choose their home decorations, owing to certain limitations of fortune. They have only been able to pick up a piece now and then, and the result is seen in an accumulation of colors and combination of colors which would require heaven-born genius to harmonize together, and then these pieces have become

HOUSEHOLD GODS.

Each piece is sacred to some circumstance in the buyer's life, perhaps. Sentiment attaches to this or that color because of association. That red reminds her of some friend's glowing fire, around which dear ones have gathered in times past. That exquisite blue, of August skies at the old home, canopied field and wood. That yellow, of golden sunsets enjoyed when all life's horizon was a halo of auriferous splendor. Affected thus by color associations, it is no wonder the housewife retains her motley collection of things, separately beautiful, but as a whole not so.

Now, can harmony be effected without a wholesale slaughter of these household gods? Yes, but one or two things will be necessary; either a knowledge of the science of color, which few persons possess, or a cultivated taste, which also is a rare thing. The presence of all the colors of the prism, and many of their hues, shades, tones or tints, does not necessarily imply incongruity of color. It is simply the relative amounts and their disposition which we have to do with. We must effect a perfect balancing of the colors, and this by a re-arranging of things. An obtrusive color may be toned down, or its power lessened by placing near it some other strong but more harmonious color. It is really only a matter of adjustment, a balancing of color, that confronts the housewife.

But how infinitely better to exercise care while choosing selections which must come piece by piece through years of buying, than to pile up a confused jumble of incongruous furnishings. If not sure of her own ability, let her ask advice, and she may, with safety, confine her choosing to a single color for each room, and of which she can have the number of shades her fancy may incline to.

A COMBINATION OF TWO COLORS

or more is also advised, though this will involve more skill or care than one color. But the two colors must not both be strong, nor shall any bright color and gold be placed together. With sage green or olive green a nice effect is possible by the use of tawny pink, maroon, cream white and dull yellows. Peacock green combines well with old pink or rich cardinal red. Brilliant deep red with pale old blue and deep yellow gives a happy effect. The list of effective color schemes is a long one. You simply need to possess it. Then it would seem that one would simply need to have this list and—go ahead! But not so. Taste is essential also. Your list might enable you to make a display, but that is quite another thing. Taste doesn't put everything in one room, until it looks like a shop and tires the eye with a confusion of colors and a jumble of objects. Taste will give us barren spaces to rest the eyes on; subduing shadows will exist in rooms much used, imparting a sense of restfulness. There had better be too little decoration than too much. The housewife would not want to be constantly attired in her best—jewelry and all—nor would her husband and family wish her so. And there is just such impression of unrelieved display in many domestic interiors.

Edmund Russell, the artist and lecturer, gives us some wholesome

advice anent this subject. He says: "Don't be too showy and complex; don't make your napkin rings too emphatic and obtrusive. The lady who wears her initials in diamonds on a brooch is vulgar. Don't put your initials or your name on everything you possess, so that people who pick up a fork, or look at a pillowsham will read, 'John Smith, my property.'"

Taste, rather than skill, is most needed in the furnishing of one's home, and good taste is not rare, even if the cultivated article is.

SCULPTURE.

A LECTURE BY ALMA TADEMA, BEFORE THE GUILD AND SCHOOL OF HANDICRAFT, LONDON.



SCULPTURE is neglected in England.

In a country where there are so many beautiful specimens of the art in our cathedrals, we ought to try to regain what is perhaps the highest of the arts, and the noblest expression of the artistic spirit. I say "perhaps"—you must excuse the painter's "perhaps;" for though there is more realism in sculpture than in painting, though the sculptor has a more material way of communicating his feelings; yet, on the other hand, the painter has more means at his disposal than the sculptor. For instance, the painter can give you a certain "atmosphere," he can make you almost forget that his portrait is only a portrait; but a sculptor—he cannot do that, and his art must always therefore remain more realistic, more material. It is, for this reason, that, for what may be called "fancy subjects," the public looks to painting rather than to sculpture.

Nevertheless it is a great pity that sculpture should be so much at a discount as it is in England now. And of what is this the result?—It is the result of wrong ideals, both among artists themselves and among the public. The subject of sculpture is partly the offspring of the modern idea that our fathers were worth nothing, and that whatever we do we must do all "off our own thumb." Why, I have heard Parisian artists propose to burn all the contents of the Louvre and throw them into Seine. I call that a wrong ideal: it is false—this feeling of our being so much better than our forefathers—false and irreverent!

I will tell you a story of the celebrated French artist, Courbet, which illustrates many things relating to the "subject" of sculpture, and will show you what I meant by saying, that it is a materialistic art. A young man one day brought him an ambitious work representing an angel. "Have you ever seen an angel?" inquired the master. "No, sir," replied the young man. "Neither have I," was the master's parting word; "go away!" That is it—unless the art is the material representation of what you see—it is nothing; it has no necessary function in life. And, indeed, this can be applied further still, and to all art. All great art must, in some form or other, bear relation to life—be in accord with the things we daily see and feel. A friend of mine, a Scotch lady, has said so beautiful a word on this subject that I have written it on the walls of my studio: "As the sun colors flowers, so art colors life."

Now, in this matter of sculpture we certainly seem to be doing our best; our good friends, the architects, do what they can; all over London there are pedestals on our public buildings; pedestals here, pedestals there, pedestals everywhere; but unfortunately all the pedestals remain empty. Yet what opportunities they would afford for sculpture to color life! What opportunities, for instance, for the sculpture of all kinds of virtues: for help to the poor and all that kind of thing! And not only are opportunities thrown away, but even the architectural effect of our buildings is spoiled by the neglect of them. For instance, there are big pedestals left to finish off the National Gallery; but only the small domes are executed. These were designed to be supported by groups of sculpture. As it is, the domes look very ugly—like pepper-pots; but if the sculptures had been added, to supply what artists call a skyline, they would be complete.

Why is public sculpture thus neglected? I think that the system of competition is largely to blame. Competition in everything; competition in our national life in general, competi-

tion in our system of art production in particular. Take the instance of the creating of works of art for public buildings; Competition and Officialism! There is one nice kind of tape which I hate, and that is red tape; but a man who exists only by this tape naturally won't let it loose: on the contrary, he sticks to it—he would lose his salary if he didn't. The proposed new War Office was a scandalous case. Distinguished artists were appointed to decide. Several people competed: and the competition was decided in favor of a country firm. The firm was delighted and came up to London; but then red tape came up too—in fact was already there, and decided that after all there should be no new War Office. This ought not to be. If a man goes in for a competition and gains it, then he ought to have the job. *[This sentiment was loudly cheered.]*

Then there is another case. I have been told that all the money left for sculptures on Blackfriars Bridge has been swallowed up in competitions that have all come to nothing. Now, that's a pity! It would have been much better that one of the competitions should have been accepted, even if inferior works had been chosen, than that there should be no money left for any sculptures at all. However, now there are some more empty pedestals to go with the others!

Look at France. How is it that France is so rich, even after having been vanquished in a disastrous war and after paying an enormous war indemnity? She is defeated: she pays; and yet she does not lose her European supremacy in art. Why? It is because her people are easily first in artistic skill and taste. And as that is so, you still understand how much I appreciate all new efforts, such as you are making here at Toynbee Hall, with this School and Guild of Handicraft of yours, to spread the feeling for art and beauty. As soon as we English can make our productions as tasteful as the French, our work will be better than theirs, for already it is more solid. Our earthenware is better than any other. Our Minton ware and Doulton ware are admirable. I was at Rome not long ago, and went over the Farnesina Palace, and was pleasantly struck by finding a Minton pot on a mantelpiece, holding its own in the company of Raphael and Michael Angelo. *[Cheers.]*

But we cannot expect to make all productions more tasteful until the love of beautiful things is more widely spread among our people. To implant this love in the individual is the great thing wanted, and the greatest thing of all is to make every workman feel that he is an artist. This Minton and China ware is called "industrial art." Now, that phrase is an invention of modern times. In the great times of art there was no "industrial art:" all art was simply "art." The new idea is one result of the division of labor which characterizes

modern times. In some things the change is good. In old times a painter was also a maker of pots. Well, a painter now could probably make pots too if he tried; but perhaps after all it is better that he should confine himself to the higher branch of art. That is the good side of division of labor; but if it is not also to have a bad side, we must take care that the man who sticks to making pots does not lose the sense that he, too, is an artist. *[Cheers.]*

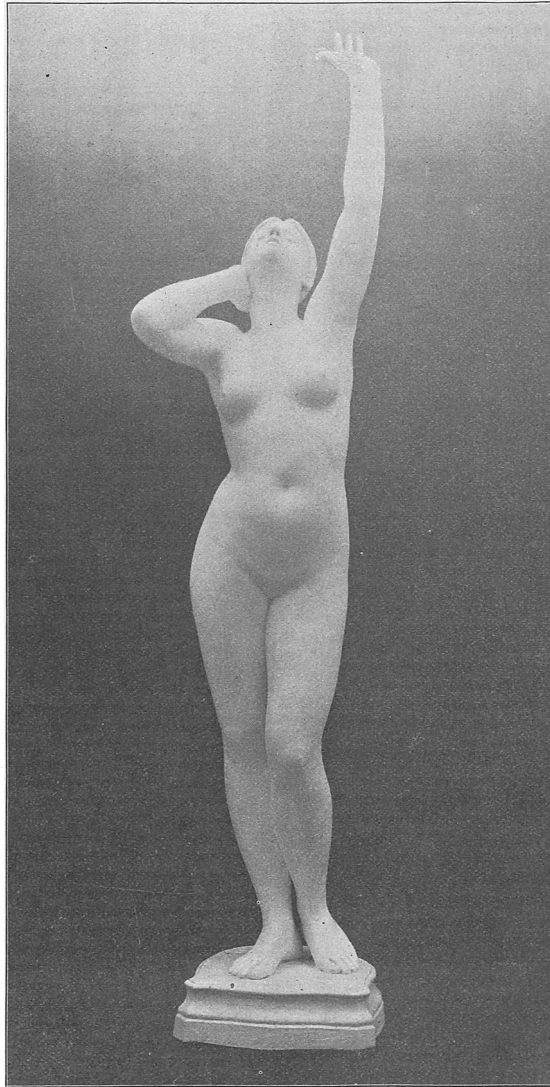
Everybody cannot be a Raphael, and everybody cannot be a Phidias; but everybody can be something. Everybody can say with De Musset, "If my glass is small, yet I drink out of my own glass." Every stone cannot be the corner stone, but every stone has its place; if it had not, no building and no society could stand. If only every artist who carved beautiful stones, and every artist who drew beautiful faces, would recognize that each sincerely admired the other, then we should all see that we were brethren in art together.

The love of Beauty is the root of all good, and I am glad to note some favorable sign of a movement in the present day toward the wider dispersal of taste: I lay great value, for instance, on the Kindergarten system, which recognizes that children take interest in the forms of things before they do in literary ideas—that education, in other words, recognition of this principal in early education, develops in a child a taste for art that never leaves it; it is the means of teaching that source of pleasure, the possession of which a friend envied me the other day. "You enjoy," she said, "things in nature which I pass by without seeing." This taking pleasure in natural forms, is not only a source of happiness, but is the secret success in "industrial art;" and this form of art is nearer perhaps to sculpture than to painting.

I cannot lay too much stress on the importance of this relationship between sculpture and industrial art; of the value a little understanding of sculpture will be to you who are engaged in industrial art, and of the need for your studying and enjoying it. Why, there is sculpture everywhere—the elements of sculpture are in everything. There is sculpture in this lamp on the table before me. Its manufacture has required considerations of shape and proportion, and that is sculpture. There is sculpture in the handle of a tool.

The handle has to be given a certain sweep, certain lines of curvature; that is sculpture; and the greatest of all the periods of Art was the Greek period, and that was the period of sculpture.

Now, why is it that Greek art was so grand? Is it simply because Greek workmen took pleasure in everything they made, no matter how simple, and because they tried to make everything as well as they possibly could.



"DESPAIR."—A STATUETTE, BY C. E. DALLIN.